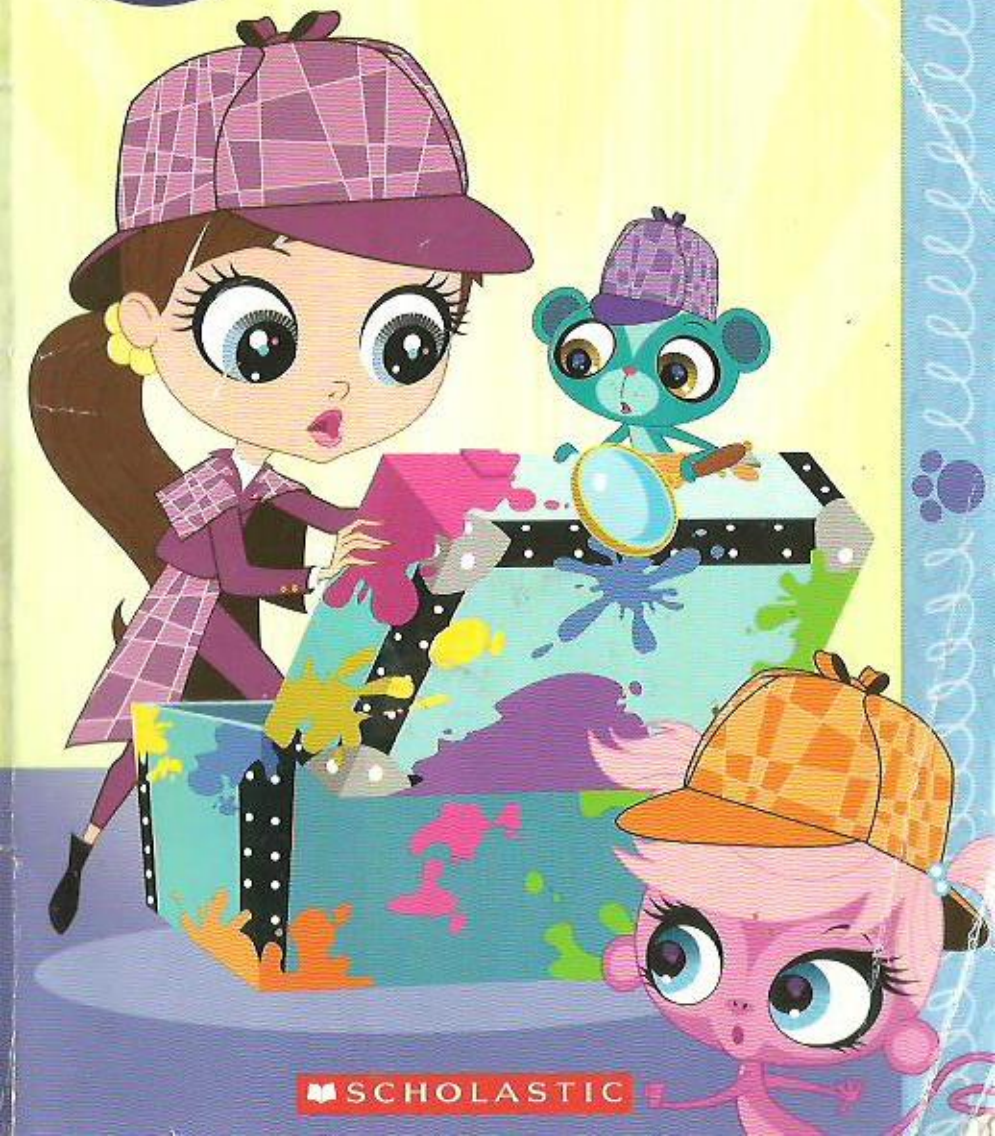
Littlest Pet Shop

Pet Shop Detectives



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Pet Shop Detectives

by Judy Katschke

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Chapter 1
Fashion Fame

Blythe Baxter was hanging up he
latest pet outfits when Mrs. Twombl
rushed over with big news

"The Shop Til
You Drop Networ
just called," Mrs
Twombly sai
excitedly. "The
want to sell Blyth
Style fashions o
TV!"

"My pet designs?" Blythe gasped. "On TV?"

"And after everyone sees them, Littlest Pet Shop will be bigger than Bloomingtails!" Mrs. Twombly said.

Blythe had never been this excited. Bloomingtails was the fanciest pet department store in Downtown City. And since good news traveled fast at Littlest Pet Shop, Blythe's furry, scaly, and spiky friends surrounded her. They were already excited!

"The show needs a name," Russell the hedgehog said. "Something that's catchy."

"Catchy?" Sunil the blue mongoose

groaned. "The last thing I want is a cold!"

Blythe's eyes lit up with an idea. "How about Blythe's Tremendous Trunk Show? A trunk show is when a designer puts together an extra-special collection," she explained.

"What was that, Blythe?" Mrs.

Twombly asked from across the room.

Oops! Understanding the pets was Blythe's big secret. A secret she kept from everyone—even her dad!

"Um . . . we can fill a trunk with my best outfits," Blythe explained. "Then paint it in cool colors!"

"And I know just who can paint it," Mrs. Twombly said. She held up a newspaper. "Meet Andy Splatwall!"

Blythe stared at the front-page picture. "An elephant?" she asked.

"Andy blasts paint through his trunk,"

Mrs. Twombly explained. "Trunk . . .
trunk show? Get it?"

"Awesome idea!" Blythe declared.

"Good!" Mrs. Twombly said. "I'l
call Andy's manager now!"

"Yay, Blythe!" Minka the monke
cheered.

"Of course, you'll need some supermodels. And I have modeling experience," Zoe the glam Spaniel added.

Pepper the skunk held an empty frame over her face. "Chec
out my headshot!" she joked.

"Check out my pivot turn!" Vinni

said. The dancing gecko did a spin before wrapping himself in his tail.

Suddenly, Blythe spotted a stylish woman snapping pictures of her outfits. Wow! It was Anna Wintergreen, the owner of Bloomingtails!

Blythe quickly walked over to Anna. "May I help you?" she asked.

Anna peered over dark shades at Blythe. "No, thank you," she said. "I have *exactly* what I need!"

Blythe and the pets watched the mysterious fashionista leave the store. What was up with *that*?

Chapter 2
Trouble-Times-Two

"I can't believe Andy Splatwal agreed to paint the trunk thi afternoon," Blythe said as she selecte clothes for her trunk show. "And th TV network thinks Andy is a genius They can't wait to feature his art o my trunk. This is huge!"

"So is Andy!" Pepper joked.

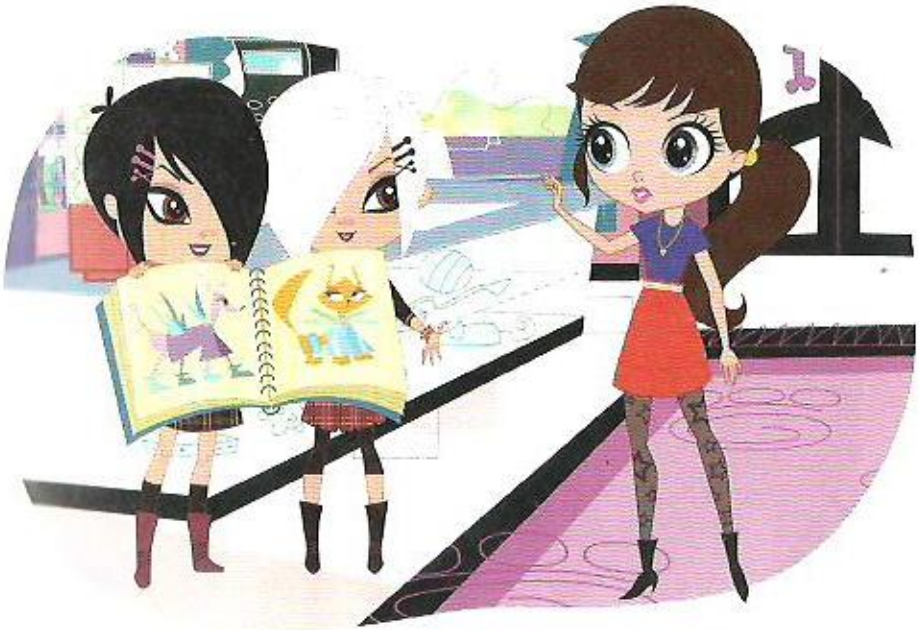
"Imagine." Blythe sighed. "Tomorrow my pet clothes will be on national TV—"

"You mean *our* pet clothes!" a voice interrupted.

Blythe groaned. The voice was half of trouble-times-two: Whittany and Brittany Biskit!

"'*Our* clothes'?" Blythe asked as she faced the twins. "What do you mean?"

"Show her, Brittany!" Whittany said.



"Here!" Brittany said shoving a sketch in Blythe's face. It was a sketch of pet clothes. Ugly pet clothes!

"We are launching a line of creature couture," Whittany explained, "for Largest-Ever Pet Shop."

"The insanely successful pet store our father owns," Brittany said.

The big-box pet store was a pet's worst nightmare!

It was huge, cold, and unfriendly. Everything Littlest Pet Shop wasn't.

"What do you think?" Brittany asked. "Not that we care."

"We just want you to sell our clothes with yours on the Shop Till You Drop Network," Whittany said, "in exchange for a seat at our lunch table at school."

"An offer *nobody* can refuse!" Brittany added.

Nobody but Blythe.

"Sorry," Blythe said. "But the Tremendous Trunk Show is for my designs only."

Whittany and Brittany glared at

Blythe. Was Blythe saying no to them? Again?

"*You're* the one who's going to be sorry, Blythe Baxter!" Whittany snapped.

"*Ooh!*" Sunil shivered as the twins stormed out. "Those twins give me mongoose bumps!"

Blythe wasn't worried. "Too many cool things are happening for me to get distracted by those girls," she said. "After all, what could possibly go wrong?"

Chapter 3
Spectacular Splat

"Where's Andy?" Blythe asked. "H
was supposed to be here hours ago!"

It was almost seven o'clock. Soon owners would arrive to pick up their pets.

"It's my turn to close the store at seven-thirty, and I can't stay a minute late," said Blythe. "My dad's taking me out to celebrate my TV debut."

"What if Andy never shows up?" Sunil cried. "What if he ran away to join the circus?"

"Who's going to paint Blythe's trunk?" Penny asked. "The TV network was counting on an Andy Splatwall original!"

"Don't get your tails in a twist," Russell said with a grin. "We happen to have our own artist on board."

"Who?" Vinnie asked before a glob of paint landed splat on his head. "Oh . . . yeah."

"Of course!" Blythe exclaimed. "When it comes to paint, Minka's a pro!"

"Can I paint the trunk?" Minka cried, jumping up and down.

"Go for it, Minka!" Blythe said encouragingly.

Minka began swinging, and paint began flinging. Soon the plain blue trunk came alive with

eye-popping colors!

"It's . . . fling-tastic!" Zoe swooned.

"Andy Splatwall, step aside!" Sunil declared. "Just don't step on *me*."

Blythe was thrilled. The pets had saved the day—and her Tremendous Trunk Show!

"I'm sorry Andy never showed up," Mrs. Twombly said the next morning, "but Minka did a whiz-bang job painting the trunk!"

Minka proudly took a bow.

"Now that I've seen the outside of the trunk," Mrs. Twombly declared, "let's see what's *inside*!"

"Gladly, Mrs. T!" Blythe said. She lifted the lid of the trunk, but when she looked inside, something was wrong. Terribly wrong!

Chapter 4
Mysterious Mishap

Blythe slammed the lid shut. "Um—I forgot to pack hats!" she blurted out. "Outfits without hats are like cupcakes without frosting!"

"Okeydokey," Mrs. Twombly said as she walked away. "Just make sure the trunk is ready for the show tonight."

The pets rushed over.

"What's wrong, Blythe?" Zoe asked.

"You look like you saw a mouse!" Pepper said.

"Not that there's anything wrong with mice," Pepper quickly added.

"The clothes inside the trunk aren't mine!" Blythe wailed. She pulled out an outfit and pointed to the label: LARGEST-EVER PET SHOP!

"Biskits!" Zoe exclaimed.

"I wouldn't be caught playing dead

in their outfits!" Russell declared.

"Most of my designs were inside the trunk," Blythe wailed. "Mrs. Twombly will have to cancel the show."

"But we know who did the switcheroo," Pepper said. "Those troublesome twins!"

"They are definitely prime suspects, but we can't blame the twins without proof," Blythe said sadly. "How would they have gotten in anyway? I locked the door behind me when I left."

"Then let's *get* proof!" Russell declared.

"We're not detectives," Sunil cried. "And I look terrible in trench coats."

But Zoe was ready to sniff for clues.

"As you know," Zoe said, "I happen to have an incredible sense of smell."

"Me, too," Pepper said. "So I've been told."

"I want to play detective!" Minka squealed. "Can I?"

"What do you say, Blythe?" Russell asked.

Blythe smiled at the seven eager faces staring up at her. "I say, 'what are we waiting for?'" she cheered. "Let's solve a mystery!"

Chapter 5
Detective Dance

Blythe and the pets huddled together to work on the case.

"Let's start with a time line," Russell suggested.

"Did someone just say conga line?" Vinnie exclaimed.

"Let's dance—"

"No!" Russell cried. "A time line is a way to keep track of when everything happened!"

"Minka finished painting the trunk before seven o'clock," Zoe figured. "That's when our owners picked us up."

"I locked up at seven-thirty," Blythe added. "Mrs. Twombly opened the store this morning so—"

"The crime took place at night!" Sunil shouted. "*Ooh*, I'm good at this!"

Suddenly, Penny waved up to the ceiling. "Look at me—I'm playing detective!" she called.

When Blythe looked up to watch Penny, she noticed the "Critter Cam."

"If the Critter Cam was on all night," Blythe said, "maybe it caught

the Biskits in the act!"

Blythe led the pets to a computer. She opened the Critter Cam file and entered "7:30 P.M." A film came up showing an empty store. Until a few minutes later . . .

"There they are!" Russell said, pointing to the monitor. The Critter Cam had caught the twins crawling into the store through the doggy door!

"How could these pet clothes be so heavy?" Brittany said.

Blythe and the pets watched the twins carry their fashions toward the trunk.

"Here comes the switcheroo!" Vinnie exclaimed.

But Whittany and Brittany didn't open the trunk. Instead they hung their pet clothes on a rack!

"When Blythe sees our clothes here she'll have kittens!" Whittany snickered.

"But we didn't design clothes for kittens, Whittany!" Brittany said.

"Let's get out of here!" Whittany groaned.

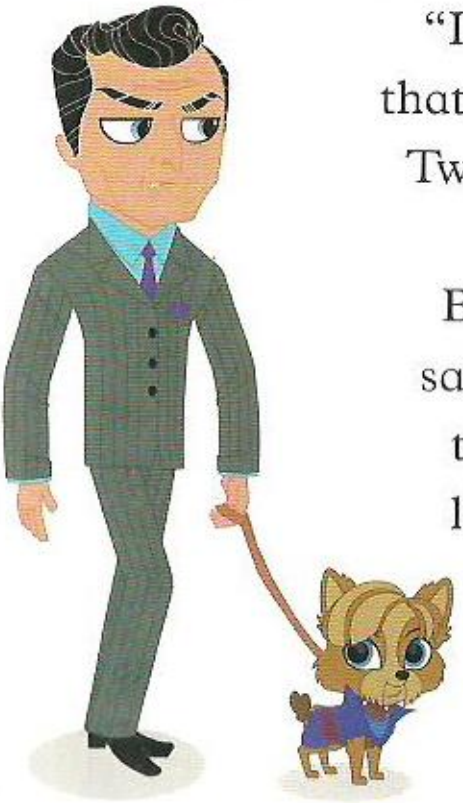
The twins left through the real door this time.

Blythe stopped the film and sighed.

"If Whittany and Brittany didn't

do the switcheroo, then who did?"

They were interrupted by Mrs. Twombly greeting a customer. The man's Yorkie was dressed from ears to tail in Blythe Style!



"I'll bet you got that outfit here!" Mrs. Twombly gushed.

"I bought it at Bloomingtails," he said. "They debuted their Blythe Style line this morning."

"What?" Mrs. Twombly said. "But only Littlest

Pet Shop sells Blythe's designs."

Blythe was puzzled until she remembered the Bloomingtails owner had been sneaking around Littlest Pet Shop with her camera.

"You guys," Blythe whispered, "what if the person who snuck into the store last night was Anna Wintergreen?"

Chapter 6
Bloomingtails–Busted

Blythe arranged a field trip to Bloomingtails ASAP!

"Fabulous!" Zoe cried inside the swanky department store. Posh salespeople were selling bejeweled collars and dog leashes behind shiny counters.

"Would you like to try our new pet perfume?" a saleswoman asked holding up a small crystal bottle.

"No thanks. I've got my own," Pepper

said to herself as she lifted her tail.

The friends headed to the designer clothes department. They saw Blythe Style outfits everywhere. They also saw Anna Wintergreen in the distance.

"I don't want Anna to see us until we check out the clothes," Blythe whispered.

"First let me check out *that*!" Zoe said.

She raced over to a gold Blythe Style jacket and slipped it on. Seconds later the glam Spaniel was scratching like a junkyard dog!

"Blythe's outfits never itch!" Zoe cried.

Suddenly—

"Eeeek!" a customer cried. She clutched her Chihuahua and pointed to Zoe. "That dog has fleas!"

"No!" Blythe said as more customers screamed. "Zoe's just—"

"What's this about fleas?" came a frosty voice.

Blythe and the pets whirled around. It was Anna Wintergreen!

"Blythe Baxter?" Anna demanded. "What are you doing here?"

Chapter 7
Copycat

"What are *my* pet clothes doing in *your* store?" Blythe demanded back.

Before Anna could answer, a door swung open. A salesman wheeled out a rack filled with Blythe Style fashions!

"My outfits are behind that door!" Blythe cried.

"Let's roll!" Russell cried. He tucked himself into a ball and barreled toward the door.

"Don't go in there!" Anna shouted.

Russell bumped the door open. Blythe and the pets charged through. But as they looked around . . .

"Holy cannoli!" Vinnie declared.

People were making fake Blythe Style fashions!

"That's why Anna was snapping pictures of my pet clothes!" Blythe gasped. "So she could copy them!"

"I think they're called knockoffs in the fashion world," Pepper said. "I read it in *Wildlife Wear Daily*."

"Well, I call it wrong!" Blythe said angrily.

"Oh, dear." Anna gulped as she

walked into the room. "I suppose the cat is out of the bag . . . as you pet people might say."

"There's only one cat in this room," Blythe said, looking straight at Anna. "A *copycat*!"

The pets gasped. So did Anna!

"I've never been called a copycat before," Anna said, blinking hard. "Brilliant, chic, fabulous—but never a copycat!"

Anna tapped her chin thoughtfully, then turned to her staff.

"Stop all sewing machines, please!" Anna called out to the workers. "It's back to the drawing board—and cutting board—until we have our *own* trendsetting line!"

"One that doesn't itch, thank you," Zoe muttered. Of course, Blythe and her pet friends were the only ones who understood.

"Go, Blythe!" Vinnie cheered as they left the busy workroom. "You really knocked out those knockoffs."

"I know, Vinnie." Blythe sighed. "But we still don't know who replaced my clothes with the Biskits'."

"And the television show is in three hours!" Sunil groaned. "What will we do?"

"Let's watch more Critter Cam," Pepper suggested.

Russell shook his head. "Let's return to the scene of the crime," he said. "The trunk!"

Back at Littlest Pet Shop, the friends inspected the trunk outside and in.

They found spatters of paint under the lid.

"I never did that," Minka insisted.

"Minka may be messy, but not that messy," Pepper agreed.

Next they found a paint mark inside the trunk. It was shaped like the letter *A*.

"*A* is for apple!" Penny giggled.

"*A* is for artist—like me!" Minka said.

Artist?

"*A* is for Andy!" Blythe exclaimed.

Chapter 8
Case Closed

"So this is the famous Fur Factory!" Pepper said as they entered Andy's studio.

Super-hip animals were dancing to loud techno music.

"OMG!" Blythe shouted. "Those animals are wearing my outfits—splattered with paint!"

But where was Andy?

"I smell peanuts," Zoe murmured.

She followed her keen sense of smell to a giant canvas. Peeking behind it they found a surprised elephant!

"Andy Splatwall?" Blythe asked.

"Who were you expecting, Dumbo?" Andy asked.

"Okay, Andy," Russell said. "Where were you after seven-thirty, Friday night?"

"I forget!" Andy blurted out.

"An elephant *never* forgets!" Russell declared.

Andy heaved a sigh and said, "You're right . . . I was at Littlest Pet Shop."

"A-ha!" Sunil cried.

"My photo shoot at *Vanity Roar* magazine ran late, so I got to the store late, too," Andy explained. "The door was unlocked so I squeezed in."

"The Biskits." Zoe remembered. "They probably left the door open."

Andy went on. "I saw that the trunk had been wonderfully painted."

"Thanks!" Minka said.

"I decided to add a few finishing touches because I promised to help," Andy said. "But I blasted the paint too hard and blew the lid open."

"And got paint all over my outfits," Blythe said.

"I felt awful," Andy admitted, "so I switched the outfits in the trunk with the outfits on the rack."

"But those clothes weren't Blythe's!" Penny said.

"I switched them so fast I didn't notice!" Andy confessed. "I'm sorry for ruining your clothes, Blythe."

Blythe watched the animals dancing in her paint-splattered outfits. They didn't seem to mind. In fact they looked kind of . . . cool!

"Ruined?" Blythe said. "Who says they're ruined?"

That night, Blythe, the pets, and Andy stood inside a real-live TV studio. Soon Blythe would sell Blythe Style featuring the paint-splattered designs of Andy Splatwall!

"Thanks, Blythe," Andy said. "I hope you all will visit the Fur Factory again."

"We'll be there for Minka's art show next month," Blythe said.

"Will you visit Littlest Pet Shop again, Andy?" Penny asked.

"Does an elephant have flat feet?" Andy said.

"I think that means yes," Pepper said.

Blythe and the pets high-fived. They

had solved their first mystery and made a new friend, too!

"We may be the Littlest Pet Shop," Russell said. "But we have some of the *biggest* pets!"

"And," Blythe said with a wink, "some of the *best detectives*!"

Blythe Baxter has a passion for fashion! Blythe Style, her pet clothing line, is such a hit that it will be featured on TV. And who better to model the clothes than the animals of Littlest Pet Shop?

But just before show time, Blythe's fashions go missing! Can Blythe and her friends solve this mystery before the cameras roll?

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